383 occasionally used on the dug-out canoes. This rubber has to be beaten before applied. It is put on cracks or fragile places in the boat, and the glue from the *tuskra'* palm (see p. 19) is put on top of this (see p. 15). Pieces of old [439 524] rubber inner tubes collected from the coast are used by the boys for sling shots (see p. 8).

281 **Skins.** Hides are sun-dried without any preservative, buzzards and chickens being allowed to pick the skin clean. They are used for beds (see p. 13), to dry cotton (see p. 16), corn, and other grains (see p. 9), and for drums (see p. 29).

322 **Wood and Stone.** Wood is important for the houses of the *Boruca* (see p. 11), for the low benches, mortars to husk grains, shafts of agricultural implements, weaving implements, canoes, fishing gear, and, occasionally as hives for bees. The only use of stone at present is 324 for grinding corn and cacao.

[Continued p. 20-B, first paragraph]

MEASUREMENTS OF TIME

805 [825] The first four hours of the day are told by cock crows.[22] The Indians talk of the "first crow of the cock; the second," etc., up to the fourth. From then on the telling of the hour is dependent on the breaking of dawn and the sun. The *Boruca* also watch the moon, using its various stages during the month as a gage for planting and even for cutting a tree. They also calculate the divisions of the year by the

[continued p. 20-B, second paragraph]

LIFE CYCLE

844 [783] **Birth.** Before the birth of a child, as well as after the birth, the house is purified with the incense of copal (*Protium costaricense* [Rose] Engler) (see p. 24), mixed with castor oil, or, sometimes, with the oil from the copaiba or *camíbar* tree (*Prioria copaifera* Griseb.) which grows in the Diquis Valley. The oil is used only as a binder, and to add to the burning quality. This mixture is put in *comales* (see p. 19) under the bed. The mother is given a purgative of *cordoncillo* (see p. 11), both before and after the birth, and is also given the liquid left from boiling the bark of the *camíbar* tree. The umbilical cord is cut with a knife made of cane, *caña blanca* (see p.

[Continued p. 20-B, third paragraph]

[22] Pittier, 1941, p. 84, also calls attention to this fact.

381 **Glues.** *See* Musical Instruments and Hunting.

281 **Skins.** There is relatively little use of cattle
[231] hide among these people. The Cabécares of the
Pacific slope who have most of the cattle, and
[415] rarely the Bribri and Cabécares of Talamanca,
make pouches or hunting bags from the sacs
of bulls. The Pacific Cabécares also copy their
non-indigenous neighbors in using skins to dry
rice, beans, and cacao. Both wild pig and
jaguar hide are made into pouches. Pieces of
[824] deer hide are used for minute bags which
777 contain good luck seeds to put on children's
[292] necklaces. In upper Talamanca men (chiefly
[534] medicine men) wear deer and jaguar skins over
their clothing on festive occasions. Peccary
hide is used to cover drums on the Pacific slope
and iguana skin is used on the Caribbean side.

314 **Rubber.** On the Caribbean slope, rubber is
824 tapped from the wild tree (*Castilla fallax* O. F.
Cook) by the Cabécares and made into pouches
(*see* Hunting).

322 **Wood and Stone.** Wood, of course, has a
variety of uses many of which have been
mentioned earlier. Among the Bribri of the
[252] Caribbean littoral, grinding tables are often
made of wood and are large enough for several
women to use at the same time. They are
located beside a water hole or stream and are
balanced on logs. On the Caribbean side,
[415] mahogany or cedar mixing trays or troughs,
273 up to twelve feet in length and supported by
four feet, are used for chicha mash (*see* Furnishings). Vertical wooden mortars for rice,
[412] shallow mortars, and large trays or bowls are
[415] common. These last two items are used for
[251] drying foodstuffs or even for mixing paste
[252] with water. Wooden staffs known as *cacique* sticks are an important part of the medicine man's equipment (*see* Special Paraphernalia and Significance).

372 In upper Talamanca, the fire stick is used (*see* Fire-making).

324 Stone is not worked today but is employed
287 for food preparation and the manufacture of bark cloth.

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

574 visitor to be overwhelmed with little presents of food. I have been pre-
[431] sented within half an hour, in one house, with five calabashes of choco-
late, at least half-a-dozen quarts of chicha, a dozen or more ears of green
corn, and a dozen ripe bananas. The little boys, with whom I made
[123] friends, fared sumptuously, for it wasn't polite for me to refuse any-
thing.

342 The houses of the Bri-bris are usually circular, from thirty to fifty feet in diameter, and about the same in height. They are composed of long poles, reaching from the ground to the apex. These rest on a ring of withes or vines, tied in bundles, eight or ten inches thick, and resting on a series of upright crotched posts, set in the ground in a circle about a third smaller than the outer circumference of the house. Above this ring, if the house is large, are one or two more, according to its size, not resting on posts, but tied to the sloping poles. The whole is thickly thatched with palm leaves, and finished at the apex by an old earthen jar, to stop the leaks. There is but one aperture to the house, and this is a large, squarely cut door, left on one side. Over the door there is sometimes made a little shed, to keep the rain out. The interior is always very dark. Sometimes, among the Bri-bris, instead of building the house in a circular form, it is elongated and has a ridge-pole, but the ends are rounded, and the door is in one of the ends.

Formerly the Cabecar houses were built in the same style; but now most of them are mere sheds, sloping to one side only and open at the ends and in front. The most pretentious house I saw in Cabecar was a roof sloping to both sides from a ridge pole to the ground, but open at both ends. The Tiribi houses are simply a roof raised on short posts, sloping both ways from the ridge but open all around below. Mr. Lyon told me that formerly the Tiribis as well as the Cabecars had round houses like the Bri-bris, but that the present style is due only to carelessness. The tribes are dwindling so rapidly that they seem to have lost heart even in so important a thing as building comfortable houses; and are content to put up with any make-shift that will shelter them from the weather. The Bri-bri houses are not only better constructed but are much better furnished than those of their neighbors. Beds are placed around the house
352 in the space between the posts and the sloping sides. These are made by planting in the ground two sticks, forked at the upper ends; cross-sticks are laid on these, the other ends being lashed with vines to the sloping rafters. Over these two horizontal sticks are placed boards made of the outer shell of a species of palm; or wild cane is lashed close together. In front of the beds are slung hammocks, between the posts, or to the ends of horizontal sticks projecting a little beyond them. The fire is placed
354 opposite the door near the back side of the house. It is kept up by placing close together, the ends of three large logs which are pushed up as they burn off. Over the fire is a barbacoa or frame, sufficiently high to let people pass under it. On it is placed food to keep it out of the way of the dogs, pigs, chickens, and ants. The smoke of the fire is sufficient protection from the latter

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

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SKINNER—BRIBRI

BRIBRI DWELLING WITHOUT SIDES
A bowlder used as a metate is shown in the foreground

[facing p. 47]

2;Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

Gabb[8] speaks of three classes of shamans—the *usékara*, or "high priest"; the *tsûgur* (*tsuku*), who has charge of the ceremonies for the dead; and the *awa*, doctor or sorcerer, who cures diseases and controls the rain. He says that these latter treat diseases by making passes over the body of the patient with a sloth, opossum, alligator, or even a chicken. Their powers are based on the magic potency of calculi declared to be extracted from the viscera of animals. They bleed their patients with small lancets and give a counter irritant by beating the affected part with nettle leaves. 756 [791] [767]

Polygyny was practised in Gabb's time. The husband, he says, went to live with his father-in-law, or, if not, he bought his release with presents of live-stock in lieu of his services. 595 591

MATERIAL CULTURE

Habitations.—Several native types of dwellings still survive among the Bribri. The more usual variety is sideless, rectangular or oval in ground-plan, with a convex or 342

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

342 angular roof of thatched plantain leaves. These lodges vary from twenty to forty feet in length, averaging thirty feet, and from the ground to the apex of the roof-ridge they are eight to ten feet high. In general appearance they closely resemble the houses of the Florida Seminole, but usually lack the sleeping platforms of the latter (pl. 1).

Some houses are provided with floors about four feet from the ground, which generally are made of splints of palm or other wood, lashed with lianas to a framework of beams. Such floors afford an uncertain and yielding footing to a heavy person. Generally the floor covers only a portion of the ground area, an open space being left at one end to accommodate the fireplace, which is situated on the hard-beaten earth. The raised floor is reached by a short, log ladder, the steps of which are closely spaced notches. [352] Hammocks of native make swing from post to post across the lodge above this floor. Sometimes the floor is encompassed by a loose wall of sticks, set up vertically and [231] bound together, the intervening space be-

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

342 Pl. II

SKINNER—BRIBRI

A BRIBRI "KING'S HOUSE OR PALENQUE." THE FIGURE AT THE LEFT IS RAMON, THE LAST BRIBRI "KING"

[pacing p. 48]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

tween floor and earth being used as a pig-pen or a chicken-pen,] while the Indians place their hammocks near the fire at the floorless end of the dwelling. /

/ This floorless end of the lodge frequently has a small, quadrangular enclosure made of small sticks lashed together, in which are kept [the culinary utensils, especially the great, pointed-based, pottery chicha jars, which are tied to the side-posts of the pen and are propped with stones to keep them upright (fig. 1). [The floor here is also cumbered with the firelogs, radiating like the spokes of a wheel, with the fire at the middle.] [Calabashes for water or for the preparation of cacao] lie without order on the ground. Generally in this quarter one may see also [the great, flat-topped, natural, river bowlder (which takes the place of the old-time carved stone metate), and the round pebble which serves as a mano]\ One such large bowlder, possibly a drift rock, was seen in the middle of a trail, well out in the jungle and far from any habitation. The Bribri women still went there to grind their corn, for on several occasions traces

342 [231] [415] [354] [415] 412

2;Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

412 of fresh meal were seen on its surface. A similar bowlder mortar may be seen in the foreground in pl. I.

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FIG. 1.—Method of supporting a chicha jar.

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354 In the two circular houses of chiefs that still remained, the arrangement of household furnishings was more promiscuous, but in

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

both cases the fireplace was opposite the door, near the side, and not in the middle. 942 352 [354]

From the beams and the roof of the ordinary Bribri house are suspended carrying bags and baskets in which are stored calabashes and other utensils, while bows, arrows, and blowguns are held in crude racks or stuck in the thatch. Under the angle of the roof is often a rude attic, made of rough-hewn plank flooring, on which rests one or more great, cylindrical, corn receptacles, or granaries, of bark, and nearby one is likely to see a string or two of braided corn.

Sometimes a long, goblet-shaped, wooden drum, with an iguana-skin head, a number of circular pieces of iguana-skin for fresh drum-heads, or a cluster of several drums, may swing from a rafter at one side; or one may observe plumes of macaws, and the paws, flesh, or skin of jaguars and armadillos, hanging freely or tucked in a woven *chákara*, or bag, to be used as medicine. Again, but rarely, these may be accompanied with a shaman's small gourd rattle with a bone handle. Tame parrots, parra- 352 534 000

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

231 Tame parrots, parrakeets, macaws, and other birds, or mammals, such as monkeys, screech at the visitor from a safe retreat in the rafters, and there is always a host of dogs to guard against.

342 Another, now uncommon, type of lodge is oval or round, a trifle larger and flatter than the form described. Its outer wall is only about four feet high, loosely built of sticks set up vertically and tied together. This type of lodge is light inside, but its sides are not tight; it has no raised floor, and no smoke-hole. The kitchen is always some distance from the door, and though never in the center of the building, is often at the end opposite from the entrance.

352 516 [532] In all the forms of lodges observed, there are many four-legged stools, sometimes roughly carved to imitate tortoises, and very long benches. The Bribri, when at home, never squat on the bare ground like their North American relatives, but each member of the family, including the youngest child, has his own seat.

342 The last type of Bribri house to be mentioned is the most striking. It is called today a "*palenque*," or "king's house," by

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

the natives. In the spring of 1917 only two examples were to be found, and one of these had been abandoned and was falling into decay. These houses are great conical structures, about a hundred feet in circumference, consisting of thatched walls rising from the ground to a sharp point, forty or fifty feet above, which is capped by an inverted kettle to prevent leakage during inclement weather (pl. II). The doorway is high enough to admit a man without stooping, and is protected by a roofed but sideless vestibule. Inside all is dark, for no light is admitted except through the door, and the interior is thoroughly smoke-blackened. A rectangular platform, about ten feet square, made of puncheons supported by vertical beams, supports the bark granaries and some pottery vessels, together with a small supply of pounded clay for blowgun pellets. The sides are festooned with weapons and utensils, while pigs enter freely and root about among the stools and benches. Piles of palm-leaves around the sides indicate beds. We were told that

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2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamança SA19
Bribri

342 [592] We were told that these great houses were at one time inhabited by groups of related families.

Dr Gabb,[9] writing nearly fifty years ago, presented the following account of his observations regarding the houses of the Bribri of his time:

"The houses of the Bri-bris are usually circular, from thirty to fifty feet in diameter, and about the same in height. They are composed of long poles, reaching from the ground to the apex. These rest on a ring of withes or vines, tied in bundles, eight or ten inches thick, and resting on a series of upright crotched posts, set in the ground in a circle about a third smaller than the outer circumference of the house. Above this ring, if the house is large, are one or two more, according to its size, not resting on posts, but tied to the sloping poles. The whole is thickly thatched with palm leaves, and finished at the apex by an old earthen jar, to stop the leaks. There is but one aperture to the house, and this is a large, squarely cut door, left on one side. Over the door there is sometimes a little shed, to keep the rain out. The interior is always very dark. Sometimes, among the Bri-bris, instead of building the house in a circular form, it is elongated and has a ridge-pole, but the ends are rounded, and the door is in one of the ends."

482 The method of transporting the bundles of platanillo leaves used in house-building

peoples (see p. 26), and are, curiously enough, 177
practically the only group in modern Costa 48
Rica who have retained their indigenous dress,
even though many of their customs have unfortunately disappeared.

VILLAGES

water for washing purposes. The drinking 312
water is derived from springs which are
located in the northern section of the town.

Curré and Lagarto are river hamlets, lying 361
in the very narrow plain cut by the Diquis
River in its upper course. They are low, unhealthy locations, the houses situated in dense
forest and thickets. As a consequence, they
are not open and fresh as Boruca, but closed-
in, and, for many months of the year,
mosquito ridden. These villages have even
less the aspect of a formal town than Boruca.
Narrow, almost imperceptible foot paths lead [363]
from one of the widely scattered and nearly
hidden houses to the other. There are no
churches or schools, and perhaps there is one
fence in both communities. Water is obtained
from shallow wells on the river bank, from [312]
small creeks, or from the river itself.

Palmar Norte is on a flat right on the river
bank. The forest comes to the outskirts of the
town, but unlike the other river villages, the
community itself is open and free of the bush.
Palmar Norte is obviously under *ladino* [177]
influence. Here, there is a definite attempt to
lay out a "town" in the Spanish-American
sense, with a *plaza* or square, a church, school,
several saloons and stores, the houses all with
fences, and broad, wide, grass-covered streets
connecting blocks or squares. It keeps its
indigenous characteristics in the still ample
space or gardens around the houses, and, of
course, their construction which, for the most [372]
part, is like that of Lagarto and Curré. Mala-
ria is prevalent among the *Boruca*, who are, [164]
otherwise, an exceptionally healthy people.

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

square *varas*.[15] The farms are away from the 241
village, and are generally fenced in. The fence
is nearly always made with living posts, 417

276 **Narcotics.** Tobacco is used extensively by both the men and the women. It is chewed mostly by the men, but also by the women. All people, including the children, smoke cigarettes, and both sexes use wooden pipes.

When hungry and no food is available, or

[Continued on p. 11-B, first paragraph]

HOUSES

342 **Houses** are built straight from the ground, without any attempt at a foundation, the floor being of earth. Occasionally, a shallow ditch is dug around the whole as a drain, and sometimes a low base of earth is built up and kept in place by wooden poles laid horizontally and supported by short vertical poles (see fig. 5, *c*), or by several wooden planks. Houses like this have earthen steps as an entrance. The majority of the structures, however, have a single pole at the very base serving as a finish between the house and the ground, and, in a measure, as a protection against water seepage from the outside (see fig. 5, *b*). None have porches.

In the lower, warmer areas, such as Curré and Lagarto, the houses frequently have a row of stones around their base, and even a protruding terrace of stones at the front (see fig. 5, *d*). This offers better protection in wet weather, as these sites are low and subject to backwashes from the river when rains and floods are heavy.

342 824 The shape of Boruca houses is square or rectangular. They are made of wooden poles with grass roofs. The wood used is *palo de mayo* (May tree) or the María tree, *palo María* (*Calophyllum brasiliense* Camb. var. *Rekoi* Scandl.). There are two kinds of *palo de mayo*. One kind has white wood and is identified scientifically as *Vochysia hondurensis* Sprague, while the other, which is preferred and has a pinkish tinge is probably *Vochysia ferruginea* Mart.? The *palo María* also has a pinkish wood, and is used only when the tree is very small. On the coast, the wood of the *huiscoyol* palm (*Bactris minor* Jacq.) is used for roof rafters when available. It is not used in Boruca, as this palm does not grow there.

342 **House Construction.** The poles which are the thickest are placed vertically at the corners, by the doors, and at intervals along the

[Continued p. 11-B, second paragraph]

= *Cydista pubescens* Blake, according to Dr. R. J. Seibert, Turrialba, Costa Rica.

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

when working and extra strength is needed, the Indians chew a root from a plant called *cordoncillo* in Spanish. It is a member of the *Piper* family, and has various uses among these Indians (see pp. 20, 21, 27).

HOUSES

walls to serve as supports. The intervening space is filled in by not so thick poles placed very close together, either vertically as in figures 5, *c*, *d* and 4, *c*, or horizontally as in figure 9, *c*. When they are placed horizontally, they are woven in and out of the supporting vertical poles which, of necessity, are more numerous in this type of construction. When the wall poles are vertical, thicker poles are placed horizontally in a single line on the outside at the bottom, the center, and the top, acting as a supporting band to hold the wall in shape. These bands are bound to the other poles with fiber ropes.

There are three kinds of fiber used in house construction. The most popular, and practically the only kind found in Boruca houses, is that known as the *bejuco de fierro* or *negro*. This is a thick vine growing in the forest (perhaps *Anthurium scandens* [Aubl.] Engler).[21] Its leaves resemble those of the bean known as *haba blanca*. From this vine, as many as eight cords are obtained, depending, of course, on the width desired. Another fiber used is called *bejuco de hombre* and is known also as *anderiel*. This is really an aerial root and is found in house construction on the coast, around Palmar Norte, where the *bejuco negro* is not obtainable. The third type of fiber is made from the bark of a tree called *capulin blanco* (*Muntingia Calabura* L.). Sometimes both horizontal and vertical wall construction are found on the same house (see fig. 6, *a*). Windows are rare, but when present, the framework is always made of the thicker poles. The window shutter, however, is of planks and the hinges bought at *ladino* stores. Doors also have a framework of poles. The doors themselves are made of the small vertical poles following the vertical construction of the walls and are tied with vines, no hinges being used. Frequently, the walls have a rough coating of *bajareque* both inside and out. *Bajareque* is a mixture of cow dung and mud. Strangely enough, the

342 *bajareque* is never put on the walls neatly, but is always splotchy, giving the impression of a quick hasty job. The houses of the *Boruca* who live in the lowlands, e.g., in Curré and Lagarto, by the banks of the Diquis or Térraba River as a rule do not have *bajareque* because of the heat. When it is employed, it is only to cover the side where the prevailing winds touch.

The outstanding feature of Boruca houses is the roof which, except for a few houses generally in the lowlands, is made of grass. The few exceptions have roofs of corozo palm leaves or of the *sem* palm. The roofs are made with great care, and last from forty to fifty years.

A pole is tied horizontally to the top of all the vertical supporting poles (see fig. 6, *b*). The wood used is generally *palo de mayo*, or May tree. Other poles are tied vertically to these horizontal poles. These non-supporting vertical poles are then inclined until they converge and cross at the top, where they are fastened to two horizontal thick poles, one under, and one on top of the converged poles (see fig. 6, *b*). Anywhere from two to four pole braces, depending on the size of the house, are inclined from a bottom corner toward an opposite upper corner, usually reaching the center of the roof and not the corner. At intervals, thick poles are tied as horizontal braces to the vertical and converged supports (see fig. 6, *c*).

In between these braces, smaller poles are placed horizontally following the lines of the braces (see fig. 6, *c*, *d*).

342 824 Despite the fact that the savanna is full of various grasses, the Indians take great pains to procure only three special kinds which grow in these savannas, and which are considered essential for a Boruca roof. The first of these grasses is called in the Boruca tongue, *bjak*, and in Spanish, *zacate de sabana*. It resembles *calinguero*, which in other parts of Costa Rica is planted for cattle feed. However, *bjak* does not have an odor. This grass has a little fuzz all over it which makes it in a measure impenetrable to water, and is supposed to keep all drops from entering. The second kind is called in Boruca, *ʃupʃus*, and in Spanish, *zacate de comején*, or "termite grass," as the termite likes to make nests at its roots. This grass is

342 824 used to level off the roof and to make an even finish. The third grass is thin and fine, and is called *zacate de palito*, in Spanish ("little stick grass") or *su* in Boruca. This is supposed to protect against and to stop cracks.

The Indians pull up these grasses, roots and all, and gather them in bundles which they tie with a vine or pieces of the grass itself. 342 [492 492] They put these rolls on an ox or on their own backs and take them to the building site (see fig. 7, *a*). As many as twenty-seven hundred rolls or bundles of grass are needed for an average roof. If the grass gets wet, each roll is opened and laid in the sun to dry. When ready to use, the grass is placed between one or two of the narrower horizontal poles of the roof forming a neat row. It is not tied, but is literally wedged-in. A roof usually has from six to nine horizontal rows of grass.

The interior of the houses varies. Some have two partitions made of *caña blanca* (see p. 8) or even of thin *palo de mayo* poles, following the same construction as the outer walls, at times, even with a smattering of *bajareque*. When a house is so divided, one room is used for the kitchen, one for a sleeping room, and one for a living room. Occasionally, a little hallway results in this type of house. However, the hallway is only the result of the partitions and is not an architectural feature. The average house, however, has only one partition, usually of canes, which sets off the kitchen.

354 **Household Furniture.** Many of the *Boruca* have, in addition to the three hearth stones (see p. 8), a *fogón*, or stove, built in the typical *ladino* fashion. This *fogón* is a raised wooden container, rectangular in shape, and supported by four wooden legs.

The container is filled with mud mixed with pebbles or small pieces of stone and left to dry. When thoroughly dry, three or more stones are placed on top to support the cooking vessels. Sticks of wood are placed between these stones and set on fire for cooking. At times small rounded mud ovens are also made on the *fogón*.

352 The *tabanco*, or wooden platform, is an important feature of a Boruca house. The *tabancos* are usually made of the stilt or black palms called in Spanish *chonta*, or *chonta negra*. There are two kinds of *chonta*. Both have

3:Sunoe E-5 (1945) 1949
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

savannas, and the Indians complain bitterly because many of these fields are being lost to nature, who is reclaiming her own.

Property and Inheritance. The oldest male member of the family distributes the property at the death of an individual. If the male members are too young, then the oldest female member does the dividing. Concerning the property, we may judge the economy of the tribe as a whole, more or less clearly from the situation in Boruca, the largest single community of these people.

Cattle is a rich man's privilege in Boruca. Amongst the three hundred and twenty-four inhabitants, there are only one hundred cows. These are owned by sixteen individuals, no man having more than six. There are forty-seven houses in the town, however, and there is an ox for the majority of the households, at least one or more pigs, and numerous chickens. In addition to this, there are four bulls, each one with a separate owner, and twenty horses divided amongst six people. The pigs are raised to sell to the *ladinos* and to eat. The cows are seldom killed, but are used as a medium of wealth, to sell, or to pass on as an inheritance. The cows are seldom milked.

Social Organization. A few vestiges of an older communal relationship are seen in the former lack of individual farms, and today, in the *juntas* or "get-togethers" of the Indians. When a new house is to be built, the man who wants to erect it calls upon his friends for help, after he has collected the necessary material. They all join together, and the construction is ready in a short space of time, the owner giving chicha, and often food to the helpers. It is interesting to note also that on one day a year, designated now by the police chief, but formerly by the council, the men gather to cut the grass and to "clean" the village of Boruca. They go systematically from house to house, and cut all the weeds in sight. This helps to maintain Boruca as a cleared, sanitary spot.

Political Organization. Most traces of political organization have disappeared. The outstanding authority is the police agent, who is an Indian, but is appointed by the Government of Costa Rica. He is, however, de-

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

SA19 Talamanca SA19
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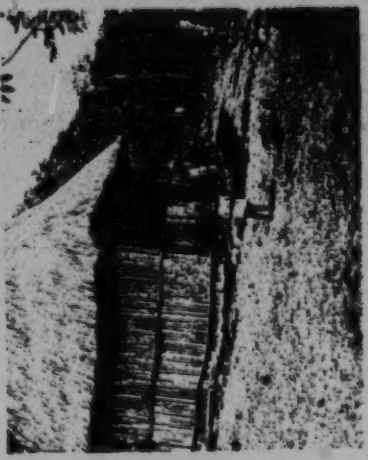

a, Method of grinding corn. b, Single pole as base of house. (note window on left, and pegs for chicks hanging on front wall). c, House base of earth with wooden pole support (woman seated on low stool making thread). d, Front stone terrace, Cartí.

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

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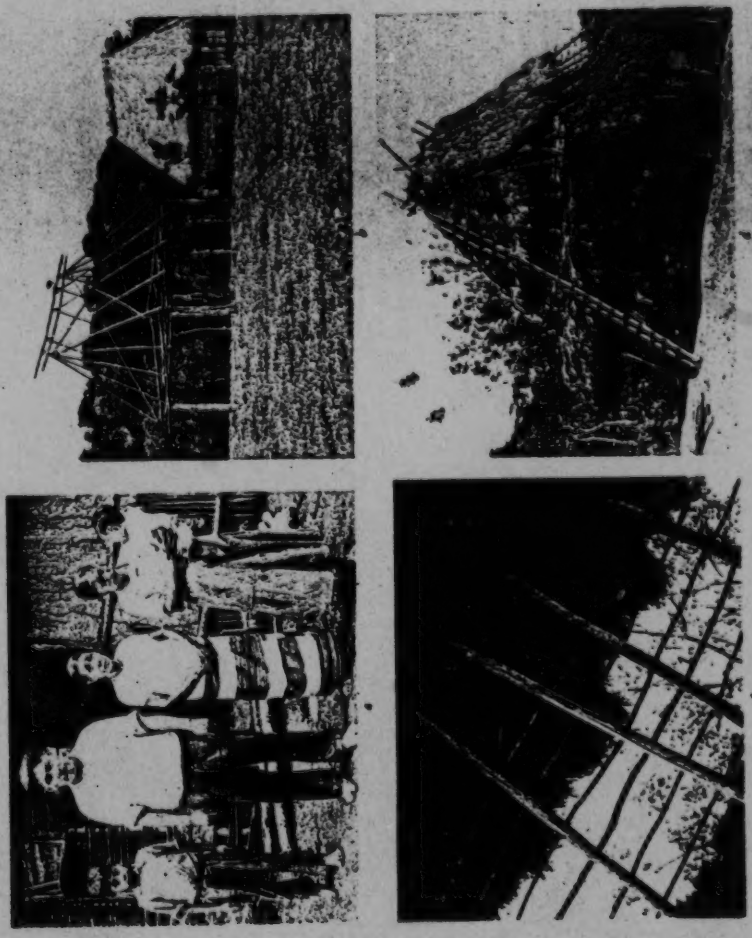

4. Two types of house construction in same house. A, Bare framework of roof, Palmar Norte. c, Roof framework in more advanced stage, Boruca.
d, Partly finished roof showing framework, grass, and ladder.

[p. 56]

[P.16(A)] SA19 Talamanca SA19 Bribri Cabecar

372 it. Matches are fairly common outside of Alta
[177] Talamanca.

251 **Food Storage.** Storage of food in a separate
[243] shelter is not practised except in lower Chirripó where the custom to grow maize as a cash crop is developing. It must be remembered that the principal diet of these people consists of tubers and *pejibayes*. It is not easy to preserve tubers for eating once they are pick-
[415] ed. Most foodstuffs are kept in net bags or hung on rafters, occasionally in bark containers, or dehydrated over the fire. This last method is the one used for keeping *pejibayes* during the months they are not in season. When needed, the dehydrated fruit is put in a pot and boiled. On the Pacific slope, how-
[184] ever, such preservation of *pejibayes* is seldom practised. Here the people depend upon
[262] bananas and plantains during the lean months which in this area are from March to August.

272 **Beverages.** Contrary to popular opinion and the picture Spanish reports tend to draw, the most esteemed beverage among the Talamancan peoples is chocolate. This is the drink cited in their sacred theology (*see* Myths, *Theological Beliefs*) and the preferred drink given to the dead for their non-returnable
[796] journey. In fact, all ceremonies of any conse-
[574] quence require chocolate. It is also the most appreciated drink to offer a friend or to give to people of importance. The drink is pre-
[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P.16(B)--QUALEST]

HOUSES

342 **House Types and Construction.** House types
[184] vary, depending upon the location. The orthodox Talamancan dwelling is large and round with a high conical roof of palm leaves, often with an old pot at the apex. In ancient times
175 it seems to have been a communal clan dwell-
342 ing called by the Spaniards a "palenque," whether or not there was a fence, housing up to three hundred people. The Spanish account furthermore reads:
[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P. 16(B)--QUALEST]

[7] Stone, 1949b, p. 10.

[361] [8] De Espinosa, 1742, pp. 77–78. ". . . en que se congregan todos los de la familia de aquel linage, sin permitirse se mezcle uno con otro, y con esto se

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
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272 pared without any flavoring or sugar. The chocolate is made into a paste after the bean has been dried, fermented, and ground. Pieces of the paste are broken off as needed, water added, and the mixture stirred with a wooden stick generally made from a root with pronged ends. The paste is wrapped in white *bijagua* [824] [484] leaves (*Calathea insignis* Petersen) and is carried on trips or left in the house for future use.

273 [272] The most common beverage is chicha, although it never takes the place of chocolate, being used as a supplement to this drink, which is apt to be scarce, rather than as a competitor. In itself, chicha is nutritious and is taken by all ages and sexes, often in lieu of sufficient food. It is essential when heavy and group work is to be done and is also drunk at parties and ceremonies. Chicha can be made from a variety of foodstuffs, including plantains, *ñampi*, and pumpkin. The favorites, however, are *pejibaye*, yuca, and maize. In upper Talamanca and Chirripó, fermentation is usually brought about through human saliva obtained by chewing the foodstuff and spitting it into a large clay pot made for this [184] [484] purpose. On the Pacific slope and in the Talamanca Plain, a form of yeast is used to cause fermentation.[74] For traveling, chicha paste is wrapped in leaves or carried in a leaf-lined *hava* and water is added as needed.

272 A thick drink is made by adding water to mashed boiled ripe plantains.

HOUSES

175 342 [361] . . . in which are congregated all those of the same family lineage, without being permitted to mix with one another, and in this way they make themselves unavailable (to one another). The Palenques are located on the hill tops, which are almost inaccessible, and are ten to twelve leagues apart.[75]

342 [192] The modern house is known in both languages as *usuri*, *u* meaning "house" and *suri*, "the pointed fishing arrow." The name is particularly significant because of the extremely

hacen para sí incomerciables. Los Palenques los forman en la eminéncia de los montes, que son casi inaccesibles, y distan a diez y doce leguas unos de otros. . . ."

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
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342 pointed roof (fig. 5). Actually, the dwelling is designed to shed heavy rainfall easily and to house four separate families (*see* Marriage).

[824] The roof palm (*see* Cultivated Crops) is called *bugə* in Cabécar and *ukó* in Bribri. The leaves are suspended on canes to dry before use on the building (fig. 6, *a–b*). The one door and the low walls are made of wooden rods and occasionally of wild cane tied together with vines. There is usually a palm-leaf shed projecting from the single doorway which protects the entrance from the heavy rains. Gabb gives an excellent description of the construction of such a dwelling which we repeat below as the technique of house making has not changed. Before Gabb, however, it is well to note that he speaks in particular of the Bribri house, stating that the Cabécar dwelling formerly was like this but today is similar to a "mere shed." The writer observed that both peoples constructed the large circular house in 1956, but that this style of

[184] Cabécar housing was more common in the Chirripó region than in the upper Coen. According to Gabb, these houses are:

> . . . usually circular, from thirty to fifty feet in diameter, and about the same in height. They are composed of long poles, reaching from the ground to the apex. These rest on a ring of withes or vines, tied in bundles, eight or ten inches thick, and resting on a series of upright crotched posts, set in the ground in a circle about a third smaller than the outer circumference of the house. Above this ring, if the house is large, are one or two more, according to its size, not resting on posts, but tied to the sloping poles. The whole is thickly thatched with palm leaves, and finished at the apex by an old earthen jar to stop the leaks. . . .[76]

[178] This type of house is being slowly replaced by a rectangular structure open at both ends.

In the Talamanca Plain, where only the Bribri or Cabécares married to Bribri live, a raised rectangular house made of the bark of

[824] *bira*, the Bribri name for the black stilt palm (*Socratea* sp. or species of similar growth habit), but roofed with the leaves of *bugə*, forms a dwelling ideal for the hot, wet climate

[177] of the Caribbean lowlands and is, undoubtedly, the result of foreign influence (fig. 7, *d*). It should be noted that here in the plain there

[76] Gabb, 1875, p. 514.

HOUSES

342 has been a long contact with the United Fruit
[177] Company. The usual Company house was raised with a *corredor* encircling from a quarter to a half of the upper portion. The Bribri house is high off the ground and consequently dry, airy, and light. There is a large
[354] porch where the cooking is done on a raised hearth; where babies and children play without crawling in the mud or mingling with the
[574] pigs; and where people can sit and have social visits. The sleeping quarters are concentrated on one side and are separated by stilt palm walls. To make such a structure, the tree is cut into the length desired for the walls and the inside pulp is removed with a machete.
[824] Vines are employed for fastening the logs together (fig. 6, *c*). These houses are known to last for ten years. The roofs have a six-year duration.

In addition to this, there is a less elaborate house which is more often seen in the vicinity of the non-indigenous settlements. This type is also rectangular. It consists of a leaf roof,
[824] either of palm or *platanillo* (*Cruciferae* sp.), supported by wooden posts without walls. It occurs in various sizes from that suitable for a monogamous family to one capable of housing more than a single wife.

On the southern slope of the range, one sees a vestige of the circular dwelling, especially among the more conservative Cabécares, in an occasional rectangular house with one rounded side (fig. 7, *a*). The circular and communal house is rare in spite of the fact that it is not
[591] unusual for several families related matrilineally to inhabit the same building. The general custom here is for the son to take his bride to his father's house until he can afford one of his own. Mud plastering is frequently applied to the exterior walls as a protection
[177] against wind. This is a custom borrowed from the Chiricanos of Buenos Aires (fig. 7, *a–b*). Both rectangular wooden rod and cane houses with palm-leaf roofs (figs. 7, *c*; 8, *d*), as a rule
[824] the common stilt palm (*Socratea durissima* Wendl.) known as *cuirka* in Cabécar, and plank houses with the same roofing or even aluminum sheeting are seen. Fences are used
[351] in Ujarrás around vegetable gardens. They are made of closely placed posts tied with vines. In Salitre, some barbed wire fences are seen in the vicinity of the school.

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Bribri
Cabecar

352 nearer to non-Indian habitations, intrusions
177 of other customs are evident. The hearth is
[354] sometimes raised and hanging shelves contain
[415] gourds, palm-leaf dishes sewn at the ends
[412] with vines similar to those of the Panamanian
417 Guaymí, and often one or two knives, forks,
342 plates, cups, etc. A pole with cut-in or notched
177 steps is used for a ladder to reach the mez-
[192] zanines which are occasionally seen in this type of house. It is significant that the Cabécares, who have had less contact with non-indigenous neighbors in the past, have no word for this ladder or mezzanine.

354 In the houses nearer to the Talamanca Plain
[824] and in the part of Chirripó near Moravia, an
[192] oil lamp is occasionally seen hanging by *pita* (agave thread). There is no word for lamp in either Bribri or Cabécar, but in Talamanca, the word for fire is used.

[184] On the Pacific side of the range, at Salitre,
[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 19(B)--QUALYS]

DRESS AND ADORNMENT

291 **Dress.** Dress does not ever appear to have formed an important part of Talamanca culture. From the middle of the 17th century
[287] to the present, we can trace the use of bark cloth. In this respect, the following commentaries are of interest:

> (the Cabécares) . . . for working and in their houses dress in tree bark called in these lands Mastate, and only to go to mass or when in the presence of the priest do they dress in cotton.[78]
>
> The dresses of the Urinamas, Cavécares, and Talamancas are short jackets, so narrow that they expose all the chest, (made) of tree bark which the Spaniards call *mastate*, and a sash of the same about six fingers wide and a yard and a half long, with which they cover their private parts; the women go about with a skirt of the same and some (are) of cotton which they tie (reaching) from the waist to the knees. . . .[79]

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P. 19(B)-QUALYS]

[78] Fernández, 1907, vol. IX, p. 501. ". . . y es de advertir que para sus trabajos y vivir en sus casas se visten de Cáscaras de palo llamado en estas tierras Mastate, y sólo para ir á Misa ó ponerse en la presencia del Padre se visten de algodón."

[79] Fernández, 1886, vol. V, p. 373. "Los vestidos de Urinamas, Cavécares y Talamancas son unas almillas cortas y tan angostas que descubren todo el pecho, de corteza de árbol que llaman los españoles *mastate*, y una banda de lo mismo como de seis dedos de ancha

535 example, *buréte* is performed by a line of men; *busiki* is with men and women in the same line; *buLtakuLe* is usually a line of men but there may be one of women. When one sex dances, the arm is interlocked at the elbow with the next in line. Women and men put their hand on the shoulder of the person in front. The single line step is the first one used in the circle dance. Twenty people or less participate in these lines. The drum is held under the arms [533] of the male dancers. Females do not play them.

535 773 The common dances among the Bribri are those of the buzzard and the monkey. Each has its own explanation. The first one is said to have originated because the boss of the buzzards went to *sibu* to learn to sing and dance. He learned and came to earth wearing a collar and showed man how to sing and dance (*see* Theological Myths: *The Dance*). Some versions hold that it was *sibu* himself in the form of a buzzard who did this and not the boss of these birds. He wore a collar and taught human beings to dance in a circle because the buzzards after eating fly in a circle.[206] When he finished his task, he retired to where the sun lives.

The monkey dance is supposed to have been taught to man by the grandfather of the Congo monkey who learned this from *sibu*. Its prime purpose is to have man happy (*see* Lay Songs: *buL-ikLək*).

535 342 532 Another celebration to do with happiness and good luck is seen in Talamanca among the Bribri when a new home is to be occupied. The whole ceremony is known as *itsṕ* (*see* Songs), taking its name from the *disaplina* palm (*itsṕ* or *kɵmat* in Bribri; *Chamaedorea* sp.) from which the mask is made today. The beard of the face is Spanish moss. After the inauguration of a house, the mask, which is supposed to assure the longevity of the family who are to inhabit the new home, is hidden and the celebrants have to hunt for it before the dance can be performed.

585 224 533 Segarra and Julía[207] describe a hunter's

[776] [172] [171]

[206] This interpretation of God in buzzard form wearing a collar is reflected in the gold figures found in ancient graves. The style and form of the collars associated with these figures are similar to the bead ones used today by the Guaymí Indians of northwestern Panama.

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539
533

(21) *duLeto*[213]

(*Bribri*)

Old timers, let's go;
Let's dance.
Now let's walk forward;
There's a place to see, old timers;
There's no place to see.
masLakésLa, the mountain, touches the river.
Let's go.

(22) Song for Cutting Wood for a House[213]

(*Bribri*)

We are going to tear down the house of *itsó*
where we went to hide
and when we reach our house with it
then we shall sing.

(23) Sister[214]

(*Bribri*)

Where sister, little ugly sister,
Where are you standing?
In what place are you coming on a raft?
Or in what place are you going.

(24) Lullaby,[215] Version 1

(*Bribri*)

Hush little one.
Don't you cry dear child
Sleep quietly
Why cry little one, baby.
Sleep, sleep, quietly sleep
Mother has gone to bring you a flower
Little ugly one, sleep quietly.

Lullaby, Version 2

(*Bribri*)

Little child, don't you cry, don't cry
While your mother goes to bring plantains.
Don't cry while your mother goes to plant cuttings.

[776]
[342]

[213] *itsó* is a spirit who doesn't die so they sing this in the belief that the house will last a long time. *See* Linguistic Texts: *itsó*.
[214] *See* Linguistic Texts: *sɛ̃́ɛ*. This song is sung frequently by women when working.
[215] *See* Linguistic Texts: *aLaLa bèe*.

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[P. 100(A)] Bribri Cabecar

FOOD VALUE OF THE PEJIBAYE[a]

(*Guilielma gasipaes* Bailey)

Constituents are measured and in quantities of 100 grams.

146
262

		Red Variety	Yellow Variety
Humidity	gm.	36.4	49.6
Ether extract	"	8.17	3.53
Crude fiber	"	0.8	1.1
Nitrogen	"	0.633	0.401
Ashes	"	1.12	0.86
Calcium	mg.	14.4	8.9
Phosphorous	"	55.2	46.1

[Text continues TOP of p. 100(B)--Qualyst]

PLANT LIST WITH USES

BRIBRI

824

	Latin	Use
tsíLi	*Heliocarpus Excelsior*	hammocks, rope, carrying bags
[283] kúrk	*Cecropia* sp.	to make fiber (burillo)
akuí-kLo	*Croton Glabellus*	for incense of copal
[278] kúLí	*Costus* sp.	for fever--mash stem and boil
● [342] tsáchica	*Menispermacen Aesampeln*	used in building house instead of nails
[278] tsbéchica	*Cissus* sp.	use whole vine, for colds, etc.
dipáchica	*Eupatorium Vitalbae*	fish poison
dutskLo	*Vernonia Patens*	to stop nose bleed; use leaf

[Text continues middle of p. 100(B)--Qualyst]

CABÉCAR

824
278

	Latin	Use
harbo	*Phyllantus* sp. Pizieri	fish poison
chato	*Serjania* sp.	fish poison
	Potbomorphe piperaceae	boil leaf; bathe children with liquid and wrap in mastate to cause perspiration
[381] bocuLá	*Euforbia sepium*	glue
chicarré	*Bocconia frutescens*	boil the root and drink the liquid for stomach pains

[Text continues bottom of p. 100(B)--Qualyst]

[a] English: Peach Palm.

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Peabody Museum Papers Vol. XLIII, No. 2, Figure 5

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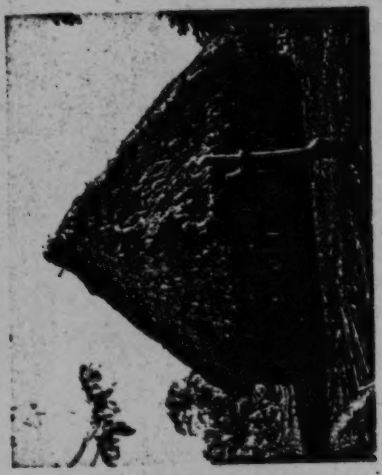

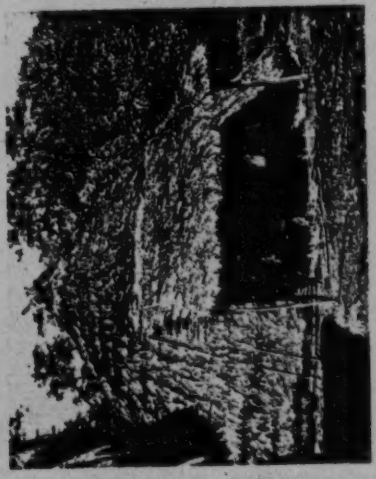

a. Bribri round house, lower Talamanca. Note vessel on roof peak.
b. Bribri round house with "modern" annex, Alta Talamanca.
c. Cabécar round house, upper Coen. d. Bribri round house, Talamanca Plain.

[END PLATE 1]

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a

b

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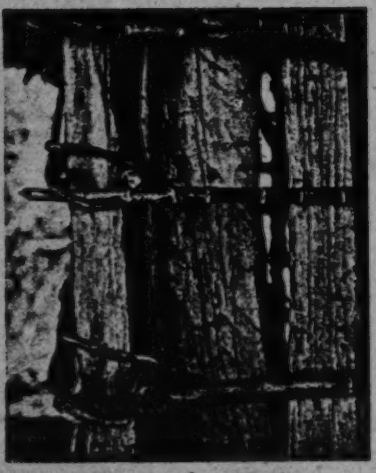

c

d

a-b, Preparing palm leaves for roofing, Talamanca. c, Detail of vine tying used in Bribri construction. d, One of four hearths within a Bribri house, Talamanca.

[END PLATE 5]

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962

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cabecar
bribri

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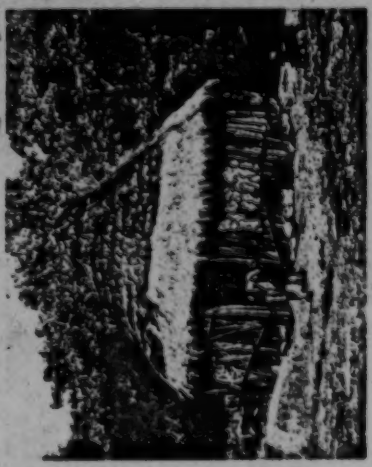

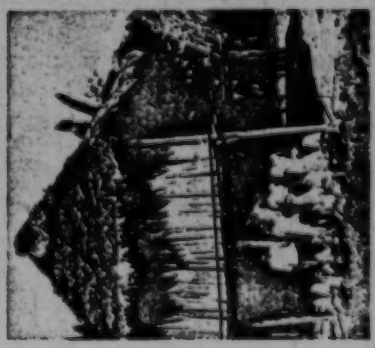

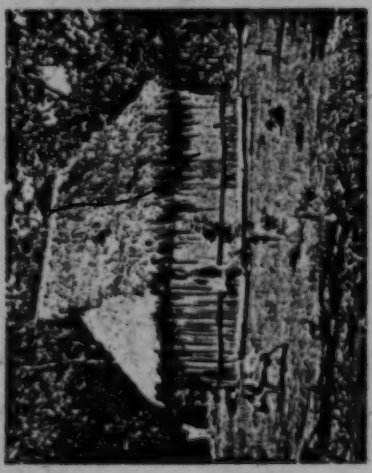

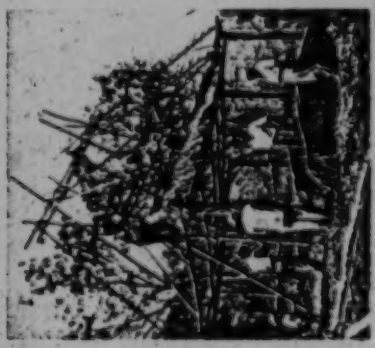

4, Cabécar combined rectangular and round house, Ujarrás. Note the grass and palm roofing. b, Cabécar round house, Ujarrás. c, Cartagena. e Bribrí rectangular house, Coliseum. d, Bribrí raised rectangular house.

[END PLATE 6]

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962

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Bribri

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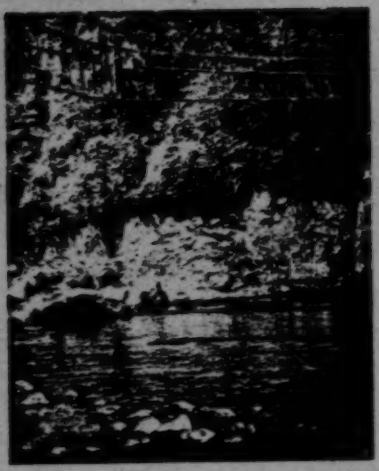

a

b

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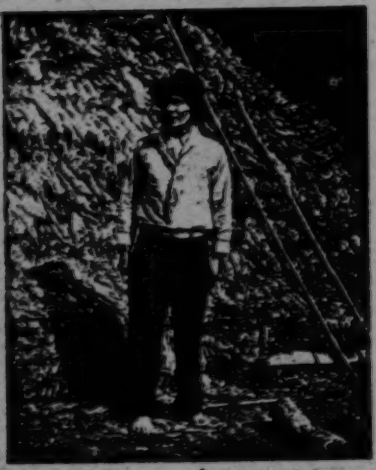

d

a, View bridge, Alta Talamanca (photograph courtesy of Gonzalo Martinez). b, Antidote to accompany the dead at first burial, Cabécar, Alta Cons. c, Cabécar medicine man with staff, Talamanca. d, Bribri medicine man, Talamanca.

[END PLATE 10]